

Claims 1, 2, 6-9, 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Brownmiller et al in view of Afferton et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,452,906). Claims 3-5, 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Brownmiller et al in view of Afferton et al and RFC 1595. These rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Claim 1 recites an apparatus for determining occurrence of a failure in an optical transport network (OTN) that is adapted to be associated with synchronous communication equipment, the apparatus comprising a failure indication detector operative to detect a failure indication pattern generated in response to a failure occurring in the OTN, and a correlating unit adapted to be operatively associated with the failure indication detector and said synchronous communication equipment, and adapted to suppress a Loss-of-Frame (LOF) alarm in the synchronous communication equipment in response to receiving an indication that the failure indication pattern has been detected at the failure indication detector and receiving a LOF defect (dLOF) indication from the synchronous communication equipment. This is not taught, disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record.

Applicant respectfully submits that each of the cited patents, and particularly their combination, referred to by the Examiner, teaches away from the present invention. It is true that Brownmiller discloses handling of failures in an optical transport network (OTN). Applicant does not claim to have invented this idea. It is also true that Afferton discloses a certain method to handle failures in a synchronous network such as SONET or SDH. However, Afferton does not teach nor suggest handling of alarms originated because of failures occurring in the optical transport network that is associated with such synchronous sub-network(s).

The present invention which concerns synchronous sub-networks that are served by an OTN, is basically directed to solve the problem whereby a failure is generated in the OTN but is erroneously interpreted at the synchronous sub-networks served by that OTN as a failure in one or more of the synchronous sub-networks. This erroneous interpretation will in turn result in a complicated monitoring and maintenance of the sub-networks, because there is no way to determine at the synchronous sub-networks level that the failure did not occur thereat, but at the OTN level.

To solve this problem, the present invention suggests a method and device to overcome this problem, and

when the failure occurs at the OTN, to ensure that the alarm that would otherwise be generated at the synchronous sub-networks, is suppressed.

Applicant respectfully submits that this solution, as recited in claim 1, is not found in the prior art of record whether taken alone or in combination as proposed by the Examiner.

Claims 2, 6-9, 12 and 13 depend from and include the recitations of claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are patentable in and of themselves and as they depend from and include the recitations of claim 1 which is patentable for the reasons discussed above.

With respect to claims 3-5, 10 and 11, Applicant respectfully submits that the RFC 1595 reference does not remedy the deficiencies noted above with respect to Brownmiller and Afferton. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3-5, 10 and 11 are patentable in and of themselves, and as they depend from and include the recitations of claim 1 which is patentable for the reasons discussed above.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal

Appln. No. 09/895,310
Response dated September 10, 2004
Reply to Office Action of May 10, 2004

of the outstanding rejections of record. Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance and early notice to this effect is most earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 628-5197.

Respectfully submitted,

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